

Business and Communication Systems

General Certificate of Secondary Education **GCSE 1950**

Report on the Components

June 2008

1950/MS/R/08

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This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this Report.

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Any enquiries about publications should be addressed to:

OCR Publications
PO Box 5050
Annesley
NOTTINGHAM
NG15 0DL

Telephone: 0870 770 6622
Facsimile: 01223 552610
E-mail: publications@ocr.org.uk

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Chief Examiner's Report

Centres are strongly advised to read this report in conjunction with the examination paper and mark scheme, together with the support material available on the OCR website.

It would prove beneficial to Centres with a large entry, or to those Centres where adjustments to coursework marks have been made in past series, to avail themselves of the Coursework Consultancy Service. Centres can submit up to five photocopied pieces of marked coursework (or completed tasks) from across the mark range. These will be looked at by a senior OCR Moderator who will write a short report in response offering guidance with the marking of the coursework. If appropriate, the Coursework Consultant may offer guidance about how the work could be improved. This service is available between September and the end of March of each academic year. Work should be sent to the Business and Communication Systems Qualifications Manager, OCR, Progress House, Westwood Way, Coventry, CV4 8JQ. Please allow a four week turn around time when sending work for consultancy.

The majority of candidates produced high quality coursework and it is pleasing to see, yet again, that generally new Centres entering candidates have applied the mark scheme correctly. The trend towards the vocational type of candidate continues.

Within the written papers, candidates should be encouraged to answer in the context of the question to gain higher level marks. It would appear Centres are adopting the guidance provided in relation to evaluative type questions and this was evident in the quality of responses provided. However, Centres need to ensure that they cover all aspects of the specification to allow candidates the maximum opportunity to do well.

The attendance at INSET this year has been encouraging and it is always pleasing to share ideas and resources with delegates from other Centres. Details of all INSET provision is available from the OCR Customer Contact Centre on 01223 553998 or OCR's website www.ocr.org.uk/training

1950/01 Foundation tier paper

General Comments

The number of candidates who appear to have not been fully prepared for this examination is diminishing, but still affects a number of Centres. Some Centres still appear to enter all their candidates for the Higher tier, where entry for the Foundation tier would have been more appropriate for many.

There are still many instances of candidates failing to gain marks due to a misreading of the questions. If a question asks candidates to explain the drawbacks to customers, they will score no marks for a list of benefits to the business. Candidates should pay careful attention to the command words in each question.

Centres are once again reminded that where questions ask candidates to name a particular type of applications software (e.g. spreadsheet), they will gain no marks for giving a brand name (e.g. Microsoft Excel or Lotus 1-2-3). The specification requires candidates to have a knowledge of types of applications software, not *examples* of software applications.

A number of candidates still believe that “quick” and “easy” are benefits of using business communication systems. These answers will only gain credit if they are explained by offering a relevant comparator, e.g. sending an email is quicker than sending a letter by post.

Comments on individual questions

- 1a Most candidates gained three or four marks for this part of the question. Some did not appear to know that Monday 26 May 2008 is a valid date format.
- 1b Most candidates understood this topic well and scored good marks.
- 1ci Most candidates gave a valid method. Weaker candidates thought that an external communication method (letter) was a valid medium to use when sending an internal business message and so failed to gain a mark.
- 1cii Most candidates who gave a valid method in 1(c)(i) could give a valid benefit and drawback.
- 2ai Most candidates gave two valid benefits to customers. A minority failed to read the question carefully and gave benefits to the business.
- 2aii Most candidates gave two valid benefits to the business. A minority failed to read the question carefully and gave benefits to customers.
- 2b This part of the question was fairly well answered. Some candidates discussed the advantages or disadvantages of sharing printers, which was not related to the question.
- 2c Most candidates provided a credible answer but failed to use appropriate technical language, e.g. by referring to the image having been ‘stretched long and thin’ rather than noting the failure to maintain the aspect ratio. Weaker answers merely stated that the image had been made smaller and so failed to gain any marks.

Report on the Units taken in June 2008

- 3ai Most candidates gave a valid disadvantage.
- 3aii A minority of the candidates scored well on this part of the question. Candidates, in most cases, did not consider the use of To: CC / BCC or a distribution list. Mail merge was often (incorrectly) given as the answer.
- 3bi Only a minority of candidates knew at least one feature of diary management software, usually the 'reminder' facility. Weaker answers described features of software such as Microsoft Outlook which are not aspects of diary management (e.g. email and address books).
- 3bii Most candidates scored a mark for recognising that privacy might be an issue, which was appropriate as the question did not ask candidates to explain how consultants could keep some appointment data private when sharing their diary with other users.
- 3ci and 3cii Both questions were poorly done. Many candidates failed to realise that the questions required them to write down the spreadsheet formulas, not to carry out a mathematical sum and record the result.
- 3ciii This part of the question also confused many candidates who wrote down a third formula, rather than a reference to the replicate or copy/paste methods of duplicating formulas down a spreadsheet column.
- 3iv A number of candidates correctly described some of the procedure for re-arranging the payroll data. However, only a few could give a clear explanation of a valid way of re-organising information. Some candidates, for example, confused ascending with descending.
- 4a Most candidates gained some marks on this part of the question, between three and five marks being typical. Common errors included inserting the address without the name of the addressee; inserting the name and address on the right-hand side; forgetting to include the date and giving an incorrect opening salutation e.g. "Dear Jim Kennedy" or "To Jim Kennedy". Marks were gained when candidates correctly composed the main body of the letter, although a few did not state that "details had been given", saying that "details will be given". Closing sentences were also rather poor, e.g. "thank you", therefore, not gaining any marks. Evidence from both the examination marking and coursework moderation suggests that many candidates would benefit from more practice in creating business documents which are correctly laid out and follow business conventions.
- 4bi This part of the question attracted a mixed response. Errors primarily focused on candidates using 'Microsoft Word' as a response or other trade marked software. A minority of candidates did correctly identify 'word processor' as their response, but some candidates incorrectly gave "DTP" as their answer.
- 4bii Just over half of all candidates gave a valid feature.

Report on the Units taken in June 2008

- 5a A good response to this part of the question with most candidates scoring between two and four marks together with one mark for Quality of Written Communication. This was due to most candidates being able to analyse at least one benefit or drawback. Level 3 proved elusive for most candidates as an analysis of both benefits and drawbacks was required for this higher level. Common errors included there being confusion between the data storage aspect (that the question asked for) and the transmission and receipt of messages (which the question did not ask for). Consequently, candidates who discussed the benefits of sending documents by email or of having proof the letter was sent did not score highly.
- 5bi This part of the question was answered poorly with candidates incorrectly stating that it stops hacking, when all it will achieve is that it will reduce the chances of unauthorised access.
- 5bii Most candidates could state actions that would reduce the chances of unauthorised access; unfortunately, most of these were actions that only a network manager or buildings manager could take (installing a firewall or installing lockable doors). Only a small minority of candidates gave valid actions the user could take (such as logging off or locking the screen when not using their computer).
- 5c This part of the question was poorly answered with only a small number of candidates knowing the actions made illegal by the Act, the penalties incurred if found guilty and the consequent deterrent effect on potential computer mis-users. Most answers simply stated that the Computer Misuse Act somehow 'stopped' users from accessing computer data or worse, stated that the Act in itself operated as a kind of firewall.
- 5d Most candidates scored good marks on this part of the question. Some candidates gave repetitive answers and so only scored one or two marks.
- 6a Approximately half of all candidates failed to gain any marks for this part of the question. Marks were sometimes lost due to imprecise knowledge, e.g. 'tax' not 'Income tax' and 'insurance' not 'National Insurance'.
- 6b Candidates who knew what BACS is generally scored well. Weaker answers gave the benefits of being paid a regular, fixed salary.
- 6c Most candidates scored well on this part of the question. Weaker answers were repetitive, or failed to justify why on-line banking is 'quick', 'cheaper' or 'easy'. Answers which stated that on-line banking means you can pay money into your bank account or withdraw cash from it without leaving home were not rewarded.
- 6d This part of the question was poorly answered. Candidates who knew about fringe benefits gave the correct answer, but they were in a minority.
- 6e Most candidates could discuss either a benefit or drawback of this arrangement. Weaker answers failed to address the implications for the business.

Report on the Units taken in June 2008

7a There was a poor response to this part of the question with only a quarter of candidates achieving more than three marks. The notice section generally gained good marks but the agenda was often incorrect with the standard items not being given. A few candidates said “briefing by the sales manager” instead of “area sales manager” and some inserted the agenda items in the notice section and vice versa.

Once again, with 16 marks available for the two document questions, candidates should be spending a considerable amount of their learning time creating business documents.

7b Most candidates knew the purpose of the Notice of Meeting and the Agenda, although a minority confused the two. Very few knew the purpose of the minutes: candidates continue to believe they are an estimate or record of the length of time the meeting takes.

8a Most candidates gave a good answer to this part of the question. Full marks were awarded to approximately half of all candidates.

8b This part of the question was generally well answered. Most candidates could take up the procedure from where the question left off and describe at least some of the remaining stages. Sandra was sacked, dismissed or fired by the overwhelming majority of candidates.

9a This part of the question was well answered. Most candidates could discuss a range of implications of home working; sometimes clearly based on personal experiences.

9b This part of the question was generally answered well. Many candidates adequately explored the improvement in communication between head office, consultants and customers and scored full marks. Weaker answers tried to argue that a mobile phone is a major motivator for an employee – these answers were not credited.

10 Most candidates scored at least two marks on this question. Weaker answers repeated the same problem twice or gave an unrelated health issue.

1950/02 Higher tier paper

The number of candidates who appear to have not been fully prepared for this examination is diminishing, but this issue still affects a number of Centres. Some Centres still appear to enter all their candidates for the Higher tier, where entry for the Foundation tier would have been more appropriate for many.

There are still many instances of candidates failing to gain marks due to a misreading of the questions. If a question asks candidates to explain the drawbacks to customers, they will score no marks for a list of benefits to the business. Some candidates showed good examination technique by planning their responses to six mark questions and by underlining the command words in each question.

Centres are once again reminded that where questions ask candidates to name a particular type of applications software (e.g. spreadsheet), they will gain no marks for giving a brand name (e.g. Microsoft Excel or Lotus 1-2-3). The specification requires candidates to have knowledge of types of applications software, not *examples* of software applications.

A number of candidates still believe that “quick” and “easy” are benefits of using business communication systems. These answers will only gain credit if they are explained by offering a relevant comparator, e.g. sending an email is quicker than sending a letter by post.

Some candidates appear to believe that their answer to a six mark question should include six points. Candidates are encouraged to take more careful note of the command words in the questions. ‘Bullet point’ type answers are only appropriate for ‘state’ or ‘identify’ type questions. These candidates are extremely unlikely to gain more than half marks for ‘describe’, ‘explain’ or ‘analyse’ type questions and are probably only going to achieve Level 1 (one or two marks out of six) for ‘evaluate’ or ‘assess’ type questions.

There are increasing instances of candidates who attempt to offer evaluation type responses to the ‘evaluation’ questions (e.g. Q(9)(a)) but who are not awarded Level 3 (five to six marks). This is typically because these candidates either offer an unsupported conclusion (e.g. “so to conclude, the advantages outweigh the disadvantages”) or because their evaluation is based upon incorrect or irrelevant analysis. Evaluation marks are awarded to candidates who either offer a reasoned summary of their argument (e.g. “so to conclude, desk top publishing software should not be used because it is easier to produce this report using a word processor, because the report will mainly consist of text”) or who are able to prioritise factors relevant to an issue (e.g. “e-procurement is an important tool for businesses providing they are able to ensure that the system is secure and reliable”). Candidates who offer rote learned generalised conclusions which could be applied to any evaluation question regardless of context will not be awarded Level 3.

Comments on individual questions

1a A good response to this part of the question with most candidates scoring between three and five marks together with two marks for Quality of Written Communication. This was due to most candidates being able to analyse at least one benefit or drawback. Level 3 proved elusive for some candidates as an analysis of both benefits and drawbacks was required for this higher level. Common errors included there being confusion between the data storage aspect (that the question asked for) and the transmission and receipt of messages (which the question did not ask for). Consequently, candidates who discussed the benefits of sending documents by email or of having proof the letter was sent did not score highly.

Report on the Units taken in June 2008

- 1b This part of the question was poorly answered with only a small number of candidates knowing the actions made illegal by the Act, the penalties incurred if found guilty and the consequent deterrent effect on potential computer mis-users. Most answers simply stated that the Computer Misuse Act somehow 'stopped' users from accessing computer data or worse, stated that the Act in itself operated as a kind of firewall.
- 1c Most candidates scored full marks on this question. Some candidates gave repetitive answers and so only scored one or two marks.
- 2a Candidates who knew what BACS is generally scored well. Weaker answers gave the benefits of being paid a regular, fixed salary.
- 2b Most candidates scored well on this part of the question. Weaker answers were repetitive, or failed to justify why on-line banking is 'quick', 'cheaper' or 'easy'. Answers which stated that on-line banking means you can pay money into your bank account or withdraw cash from it without leaving home were not rewarded.
- 2c Most candidates could discuss a benefit and drawback of this arrangement. Weaker answers failed to address the implications for the business.
- 3 Most candidates could explain at least two of the three payment methods with many gaining full marks. A numerical example or an explanation of the motivational impact was sufficient to gain the development mark for each method.
- 4a There was a mixed response to this part of the question. Approximately half of all candidates scored between six and full marks. The notice section generally gained good marks but the agenda was often incorrect with the standard items not being given. A few candidates said "briefing by the sales manager" instead of "area sales manager" and some inserted the agenda items in the notice section and vice versa.
- 4b Most candidates gained good marks on this part of the question. A failure to identify actions to be taken before the meeting takes place being the most common reason for less than full marks.
- 5a This part of the question was generally well answered. Most candidates could take up the procedure from where the question left off. Sandra was sacked, dismissed or fired by the overwhelming majority of candidates.
- 5b This part of the question was poorly answered. Most candidates failed to take heed of the question stem and discussed equipment issues. Many candidates offered the need to plan regular breaks and so gained one mark, but other valid actions such as planning non-computer work or offering free sight-tests were rarely stated.
- 6a This part of the question was very well answered. Most candidates could discuss a range of implications of home working, sometimes clearly based on personal experiences.
- 6b This part of the question was generally answered well. Most candidates adequately explored the improvement in communication between head office, consultants and customers and scored full marks. Weaker answers tried to argue that a mobile phone is a major motivator for an employee – these answers were not credited.

Report on the Units taken in June 2008

- 6c Most candidates were able to offer some analysis of the benefits and/or drawbacks of laptop use by staff. Only a minority, however, offered an overall assessment of the impact or considered whether, on balance, issuing staff with laptops was a good idea or not.
- 7 This question was generally answered poorly. Some candidates discussed how an email-filtering software system might work without considering its implications for the business in terms of cost, time, staffing, speed of communication and staff-morale. Weaker answers misunderstood the question and discussed the benefits or drawbacks of communicating by email or how spam-filtering works.
- 8a Most candidates had some knowledge of mail merge and some of the actions which would need to be taken to create a set of personalised letters using this facility. Most answers gained two or three marks. Weaker answers discussed how a message could be photocopied or how an email message could be sent to a group distribution list.
- 8b The majority of candidates gave a good answer to this part of the question and were able to offer some analysis of the problems caused by poor business communication. Only a minority, however, offered an overall assessment of the impact on the business. Weaker attempts at evaluation argued unconvincingly and implausibly that a single poorly communicated message would inevitably lead to the bankruptcy of the business.
- 8c Very few candidates knew what a compliments slip is and even fewer understood its purpose.
- 8d Just over half of all candidates appeared to know what a house-style is and could give at least one feature. There were some interesting guesses related to the nature of the case study business.
- 9a Most candidates were able to offer some analysis of hierarchical structures, typically of the drawbacks of communicating messages up and down the hierarchy. Very few, however, gave a considered judgement of the overall impact of the organisation structure or whether, for example, a different structure would be more preferable.
- 9b This part of the question was very poorly answered. This was surprising given that the question was almost a verbatim quotation of the relevant specification statement. Very few candidates recognised that an e-commerce organisation would have a greater focus on marketing, order-processing and delivery than on other functional areas, and its reliance on new-technology might result in a flatter structure.
- 9c This part of the question was generally answered well. Most candidates gave at least one valid action and could then explain how it would contribute to the team's performance. Weaker answers typically repeated the same point twice or identified actions that would be beyond the remit of a team-organiser (such as improving pay and rewards).
- 10 Compared to the last time a similar question was asked, candidates generally answered this question well. The vast majority of candidates had some relevant knowledge of trade unions and most could offer some analysis of their benefits and drawbacks for an employee. Only a minority offered an assessment of their overall impact for the employee or considered alternative means of achieving similar goals (such as staff consultative committees).

1950/03 Coursework

General comments

It was pleasing to see further new Centres this year. When it was necessary to return work to some of these new Centres they were very appreciative of the support and guidance provided by their moderator. However, there is evidence that some candidates only complete and submit the first two tasks. It would prove beneficial for these types of candidates if Centres then identified Tasks 5 and 6 as work to be completed next. This could significantly improve their coursework mark, and at the same time provide work which may motivate the candidates. There was also evidence of Centres providing insufficient guidance in relation to the work to be carried out. It is essential that all candidates are provided with clear guidance and this matter must be addressed urgently by some Centres.

There were again instances where summary mark sheets (CCS187) were not attached to each candidate's work and were either incorrectly totalled or it was impossible to read the figures. It is vital that these are completed correctly to assist in the moderation process. Please note that an electronic copy is available from the OCR website. It is important that Centres allocate sufficient time to complete all administration correctly, otherwise this has a detrimental effect on the moderation process.

Regrettably there are still Centres who are submitting extra work, e.g. Coursework Instructions, practice material, annotated hand drawn work in relation to the logo, etc. This is unnecessary.

It would prove beneficial to the moderation process if coursework could be annotated in relation to the allocation of marks. Whenever possible, candidates should also show their file name and path on each piece of work as per coursework instructions.

It would prove beneficial if addresses throughout were changed to the locality of the Centre. This would assist candidates, particularly in relation to Task 3.

If Centres have made any approved changes to their Coursework Instructions these **must be** sent to the moderator when work is submitted for moderation.

Please note that MS1 forms should be sent to the moderator not to OCR. This can delay the moderation process significantly. Centres should ensure that all marks are clearly shown, as there were many instances where it was unclear what mark had been allocated.

If it is found necessary to return the work of your Centre for remarking your moderator will provide appropriate guidance and support both in the form of written comments and verbally, if required. Please note that the work of **all** your candidates **must be remarked** and the appropriate CW/AMEND form completed to show **all** the marks of your Centre. This should be returned with your original sample to the moderator.

Assessment Objective 1

Care must be taken when "part of tasks omitted" is identified as this has an immediate effect on the allocation of marks for Assessment Objective 3.

For example, **Task 2**

If the five extra completed copies of the Client Registration Form are not included then state "part of tasks omitted."

Assessment Objective 2

Task 1

The logo completed in Task 1(a) should measure **no more** than 5 cm by 4 cm and include **text and graphics**. There were instances where these were incorrect and yet one mark was awarded. There were also instances where candidates had used logos from established companies. This is against the Copyright Designs and Patents Act and, therefore, should not be used.

There were instances where a web address was used instead of an e-mail address.

There were many instances where a name and job title were not included on the business card. This would be standard business practice and, therefore, candidates should be penalised as the business card does not “meet requirements”.

Task 2

There were instances where brackets had been used incorrectly for tick boxes and subsequently marks awarded incorrectly. Please note that the Client Registration form should be A4 size.

Task 3

As this task is to be used as a data source for the mail merge in Task 4, Centres should ensure candidates use an appropriate structure. This would avoid any problems at a later stage.

There were many instances where candidates were awarded marks incorrectly. Task 3(a) should include the original details from Resource Sheet 1 **plus** the five extra client details gained from the completed Client Registration Forms and **should not** be in alphabetical order. All other printouts **should** be in alphabetical order and Task 3d **should** be a selective printout. Therefore there should be four printouts in total submitted. It is expected that candidates should manipulate software to allow for all details to appear on one page.

Task 4

There were many instances where a “suitable e-mail” had not been completed. Candidates **must** provide a screen shot as evidence of the e-mail they have created.

There were instances where queries/filters had been carried out for **either June or July**. These **must be** carried out for both **June and July**, if not, marks should not be awarded. This should yield four results from the original data plus any other records, as appropriate, from the five extra copies.

The mail merge **must be** created using the data source created in Task 3(c) and it is expected that candidates use the letter heading created in Task 1 for this purpose, otherwise the standard letter is not “produced correctly” and marks should not be awarded.

Task 5

There were instances where the report did not contain a “suitable graphic.” It is expected that all details, e.g. axes labels, legends, etc, are appropriately displayed.

The advertisement **must be** no bigger than A5 size.

Task 6

Candidates should produce evidence of research from the Internet in relation to the agencies in their area by **copying over** details, not produce a word processed list of companies and addresses. Some candidates provided unnecessary excessive research. As a guide it is recommended that candidates provide evidence of five different agencies from each town/city, and research four/five different towns/cities.

There were instances where graphics chosen were inappropriate and hyperlinks were difficult to identify. It would be particularly useful to the moderation process, if Centres could annotate this particular piece of work.

The majority of candidates are now hyper linking to their Client Registration Form. However, the Report created in Task 5 **must be** included in the web site and not hyper linked, and should be amended appropriately for publication on the web site, i.e. the introduction, recommendations and conclusions should be omitted.

It is not acceptable to include extra printouts of Task 2 and 5 with the website. There must be evidence to show that these tasks are a part of the website.

Assessment Objective 3

Many Centres are misinterpreting the term “mailable standard” and as such marks are being incorrectly awarded.

Task 1

Documents cannot be of “mailable standard” if:

- the name, address and details have been changed from one document to another;
- “www” used for an e-mail address;
- no name or job title included on the business card;
- the letter heading takes up too much space on the page.

If these types of errors occur, work cannot be classed as “of mailable standard” and full marks should not be awarded.

Task 2

There were instances where candidates from the same Centre provided Client Registration Forms which were of the same design. Candidates need to be given the opportunity to provide evidence to show their own design ability.

The coursework instructions state “the Client Registration Form should be based on Resource Sheet 1” and if candidates do not follow this instruction then full marks cannot be awarded for AO3. It also creates difficulties when inputting data into Task 3.

There were instances where candidates provided Client Registration Forms that spanned three-four pages. This is unnecessary and, in some cases, actually creates more errors.

Task 3

There were many instances where the proofreading by Centres in relation to input errors was very poor and regrettably full marks subsequently awarded. Common errors were – no initial capitals used, Jasbinder Lali the incorrect way round, many incorrect spellings of Mansfield and Crescent to name but a few and the telephone field was set up incorrectly. If printouts contain errors, the maximum mark available is one mark.

There were instances where the width of columns had not been adjusted to show all the data. Work cannot be marked or moderated correctly if it is not visible.

As this task is to be used as the data source for Task 4, candidates should not enter all data as capitals and should ensure that the data is set up in such a way that it can be successfully used in the mail merge, i.e. appropriately splitting the various lines of the address. Please note that if printouts are missing, i.e. the mark for AO1 is zero then the mark for AO3 should also be zero.

Task 4

If any part of the task is missing then the work is “incomplete” and no marks should be awarded. However, if any part is inadequate then the maximum should be two marks. Many Centres were generous in relation to the allocation of marks for this objective. Many e-mails were poorly presented – candidates producing letters rather than e-mails and providing insufficient evidence to show that it was an e-mail. There must be a correct address on the e-mail and a subject. A screenshot **must be** provided to show e-mail structure.

Mail merge letters were often incorrect – many candidates did not provide a correct salutation by inserting the merge codes ‘Dear First Name Surname’ instead of ‘Dear First name’ or ‘Dear Title Surname’ and used an incorrect complimentary close. There was evidence of inconsistent display. Centres need to ensure that they are using “conventions of style”, e.g. block layout. An addressee must be provided and only one copy of the standard document and one copy of a merged letter must be submitted.

Task 5

The majority of candidates produced reports using a report layout. However, some candidates did not state for whom the report was being written. There was no introduction or conclusion and the report often continued onto several pages displaying A4 size graphs and charts. These graphs were often poorly displayed showing inadequate axes labels and legends and yet full marks were being awarded.

The advertisement **must be** no bigger than A5 in size.

Task 6

There were some excellent web sites submitted. However, there were instances where Centres had been over generous with their allocation of marks.

Annotation in relation to the use of hyperlinks would be useful to the moderation process.

The Report created in Task 5 **must be** included in the website and not hyperlinked and the introduction and recommendations/conclusions need to be deleted before inclusion.

Candidates need to ensure that the type of graphics used to enhance their website is suitable and relevant. There were instances of inappropriate graphics used and, therefore, showing “lack of sophistication”.

Report on the Units taken in June 2008

It is beneficial to candidates to hyperlink the Client Registration Form created in Task 2. This avoids any issues when copying into a different type of software.

There must be evidence provided to show that every page submitted is actually part of the website. Some candidates just provided extra printouts of documents created in Task 2 and Task 5.

If there is **no search** submitted, then the maximum mark available is two.

If candidates use a design template, they need to ensure they amend all parts of the template.

There were problems of actually reading the content of the website due to the type of software used. In order for moderation to take place evidence **must be** provided to show all details.

Task 8

There were some excellent examples provided of both resources used and filing carried out. However, some candidates provided very little evidence of either but were subsequently awarded maximum marks. To achieve maximum marks there must be clear evidence of both, i.e. a screen shot of their directory/folder together with an explanation of their method of saving and filing work, an explanation of any manual filing carried out and of resources used throughout the completion of the coursework.

There must also be an accurate contents page and/or page numbering. There was also evidence of page numbers being hand written on the contents page and maximum marks being incorrectly awarded.

There were instances where candidates from the same Centre had provided identical Contents Pages. Candidates must be given the opportunity to design their own Contents Pages.

Assessment Objective 4

Candidates should provide reasoned judgements as to why the various percentages have changed over the five years. There were also many instances where candidates did not provide satisfactory conclusions. These were often simplistic and did not contain sufficient detail with reasons for the higher marks. The conclusion should be that the agency needs to promote **employers** for **retail and clerical** posts and this **must be** the focus for the advertisement.

Task 7

It is suggested that a writing frame be used to assist candidates with regard to this task and that the document is 'ongoing', i.e. Candidates input information into this task after the satisfactory completion of each task.

Please note, that the material provided during INSET this year was "guidance material" and, as such, it is expected that candidates provide further evidence to warrant full marks. Candidates cannot be awarded full marks when basically copying from the "guidance material".

There were some examples provided of excellent understanding of the wider effects of Business and Communication Systems. However, many candidates provided step-by-step details as to how they had produced/approached each task, which resulted in lengthy reports being submitted. This report gives candidates the opportunity to justify why their work has been presented in such a way and to outline the difficulties they may have encountered. Unfortunately, many Centres awarded marks incorrectly when there was very little evidence provided.

Report on the Units taken in June 2008

An example for Task 3 could be:-

Why would information be sorted into alphabetical order? Why is there a need for selective printouts? Why has the file structure been set up in a particular way? What changes have had to be made to the page setup? Have there been any problems with the particular software chosen?

Guidance in relation to this task is available on the OCR website.

Assessment Objective 5

Many Centres were lenient in relation to the allocation of marks for this objective. There **must be** evidence provided of a high level of critical reflection in relation to legal, ethical, moral and security issues and this **must** relate to the individual tasks to attain maximum marks.

Many candidates mentioned briefly the principles of the Data Protection Act but other acts which should be covered are The Computer Misuse Act; Copyright; Designs and Patents Act; Sex Discrimination Act; Trade Descriptions Act; Race Relations Act; Equal Opportunities Act and the Age Discrimination Act.

An example for Task 3 could be:-

How is the data protected once inputted into the system? – passwords, antivirus software, firewalls, different methods of backing up the data, etc. How the completed Client Registration Forms are kept secure? Why is it necessary to keep data up-to-date? What are the implications of not doing so? What are the implications of selling on data without permission? Why is it important to ask appropriate questions? Why is it necessary to have an appropriate licence for the software being used?

Grade Thresholds

Component Threshold Marks

Component	Max Mark	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	100	n/a	n/a	62	52	43	34	25
2	100	75	66	57	47	n/a	n/a	n/a
3	100	88	78	68	55	43	31	19
83	100	88	78	68	55	43	31	19

Specification Options

Foundation Tier

	Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Overall Threshold Marks	200	n/a	n/a	n/a	125	105	85	66	45
Percentage in Grade	200	n/a	n/a	n/a	28.9	29.5	22.5	11.8	5.2
Cumulative Percentage in Grade	200	n/a	n/a	n/a	28.9	58.4	80.9	92.7	97.9

The total entry for the examination was 2341.

Higher Tier

	Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Overall Threshold Marks	200	170	156	139	123	100	88	n/a	n/a
Percentage in Grade	200	5.0	16.6	31.0	24.9	16.9	2.9	n/a	n/a
Cumulative Percentage in Grade	200	5.0	21.6	52.6	77.5	94.4	97.3	n/a	n/a

The total entry for the examination was 2230.

Overall

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Percentage in Grade	2.5	8.3	15.5	26.8	23.2	12.8	5.9	2.6
Cumulative Percentage in Grade	2.5	10.8	26.3	53.1	76.3	89.1	95.0	97.6

The total entry for the examination was 4572.

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

OCR Customer Contact Centre

14 – 19 Qualifications (General)

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

www.ocr.org.uk

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Head office
Telephone: 01223 552552
Facsimile: 01223 552553

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